Open File - blog

MONDAY, 27 MAY 2013

Liu Ding - Samples From The Transition - Products

Liu Ding *Samples From The Transition - Products*
2006

Samples From The Transition is an ongoing inter-related series of installation works by Liu Ding, a Chinese artist whose work examines the commodity status of the art object.

Originally commissioned for the Second Guangzhou Triennial, *Products* saw thirteen professional artists from the nearby city of Dafancun relocate their business to the Triennial.

The artists work in an art industry that deploys production line-style techniques to create landscape paintings in oil on canvas at a rate of thousands per day. The painters move from canvas to canvas as they each add their signature contribution - one paints only a tree, one a stork, one a mountain and so on - to produce a series of identical landscape paintings.

Ding interrupted the process, stripping it down to its elements, skipping steps or cutting the process short of completion. The painters were paid their standard daily rate for their work, the resulting works remained on show for the rest of the Triennial and have since been exhibited as an installation alongside an imitated gaudy interior.

The works throw onto light China's engagement with global capitalism and in particular thevarious art markets it wishes to take part in. There is a questioning of value judgments at play, not merely a critique of the international contemporary art market but an examination of an alternative system where the price is determined by how hard the scene is to paint, and the quality of the work is assessed by quality control personnel on the painter's ability to imitate a model.

The Open File blog is an ongoing curatorial conversation between artist Jack Brindley and curator Tim Dixon.

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